









told by the Captain not to be afraid the engineer went down himself to see about repairing the boiler. But he knew what was wrong about them, but heard that the coal was too wet to burn. Some of the passengers who were not sea-sick came on deck, but no one was particularly afraid. The next morning at day-break the ship's boats were got ready, and this scared the passengers. There were 7 boats in all. About 7 a.m. the passengers were ordered into the boat; there were not enough boats for them all, and some preferred to wait for fishing boats to come and pick them up. There were more than 100 fishing boats, the nearest about a mile off to the south, and they all made for the steamer but the wind was against them. The steamer was firing guns and had flags up as signals of distress. The seven ship's boats were all crowded with passengers. The passengers got into the boats whilst they were on the davits, and the captain had the davits ropes cut as the steamer was sinking. She was very low in the water, and sank slowly. Six of the boats were alongside the steamer when she sank, and were capsized. The seventh had fewer passengers, had been lowered first, and had got away from the ship a hundred yards or more. The six boats that were capsized were so crowded that they dared not put off from the steamer, and were waiting for the fishing boats to come alongside—13 of the passengers in the boats were picked up by the fishing boats. Witness himself was in one of the six capsized boats and saved himself by swimming back to it. There were none but passengers in his boat—no sailors or foreigners. He saw the chief engineer get into one of the boats but no other passengers, and saw the captain on deck just before the steamer sank. About 8 a.m. a steamer was sighted a long way off; did not see it approach the wreck; first saw it when he was in the water after the boat he had been capsized. He and two others held on to the boat till picked up by the fishing boat which brought him to Swatow.

(Sd.) KO KIONG.  
Declared on oath before me this fourteenth day of January, 1892.

(Sd.) P. F. HANSEER,  
Pro. Consul.

Ku-chang (Sd.) having been sworn, states—I am a native of Tung-shan in Fukien province, was a passenger in the *Namchow* from Singapore for Hongkong and Amoy. We left Hongkong on the 6th January at about 6 p.m. On the night of the 7th the steamer became useless, the machinery having become damaged, and the steamer rolled, and I was told that repairs were being done, but I did not hear the noise of the work. During the night I dozed, but I don't know about the other passengers. At about 4 o'clock the next morning, I and others heard a noise like the sound of a cannon, but I don't know where. People said the ship was broken and began to cry, and all of us went down. At half past five o'clock the ship took a list over to starboard. At about 6 o'clock the chief engineer told us not to be frightened as a fishing boat could rescue us. This was after we entered the gulf, and a fishing boat did rescue us from the gulf. We did not see the other ships, but one got injured, and after we had gone a short distance the *Namchow* suddenly disappeared. I did not see the captain or the other foreigners when our ship left. I did not see a foreign woman. I don't know about the behavior of the crew. After the explosion some passengers said he had seen a light and seen red lamps on the *Namchow's* mast. I had not myself gone on deck then, but I saw when I did a little later. Rockets were fired till daylight. I saw them. I was saved in the gulf with the supercargo. It was daylight, and the sun had all day risen when we left the *Namchow*. I don't know how many passengers there were. When I got into the gulf I saw a steamer a long way off, but it did not come to our assistance. We could not see it when we were rescued by the fishing boat. I am sure it did not go to the rescue of the *Namchow*.

(Sd.) KU CHANG.  
Declared on oath before me this 14th day of January, 1892.

(Sd.) A. FRATER,  
H. B. M.'s Off. Consul at Swatow.

The President then read out the greater portion of Captain Burr's report and remarked that he thought it unnecessary to read it in *extenso*. Turning to Lieut. Mogkridge he said—"You have read it all, have you not?" to which query the officer replied in the affirmative. "Then," continued the President, "I think there is nothing more to be done at present. If we can get the witnesses to-morrow we shall have to close the inquiry without further delay."

The Court then adjourned till 10.30 to-morrow morning.

When the members of the Court had retired the reports applied, in the usual way, for the papers that had been read with a view to copying them for the benefit of the public, and the relatives and friends of the deceased in particular. But the Harbour Office officials stoutly refused to comply with the request and have thereby prevented the public from being placed in possession of all the information which could be adduced as a court of inquiry for the express purpose of delving to the bottom of a disastrous affair which is enveloped in considerable mystery. Why the merchant captains present allowed themselves to be treated as of less importance than their naval colleagues, who, by the way, kept them waiting fully an hour for his arrival in Court, is more than we can comprehend. And we would urge them to demand that Captain Burr's report be produced at to-morrow's proceedings, be read in full and handed to the press for publication. It is probable that Mr. Hastings acted under instructions from his superiors, and that the order to conceal certain information or facts or comments emanated from the Admiralty, who, it will be remembered, has previously distinguished himself in this manner. However that may be we submit that neither Vice-Admiral Richards nor any other official has the slightest right to keep that report secret. Whatever it contains should be made public at once, and the Naval Commander-in-Chief be given to understand that any official interference in public courts of inquiry in this colony will not be tolerated, but on the contrary will be vigorously protested against. If the gallant Admiral will kindly mind his own business, and do it thoroughly, the public of Hongkong will be quite satisfied with his conduct, which they are not at present, by any means.

#### THE HONGKONG MARINE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION.

WHAT IS THOUGHT OF IT IN SHANGHAI.

Vice-Admiral Richards Freely Criticized.

The following ably written and sensible article, which appears in the Shanghai *Mercury* of January 22nd, will prove especially interesting to our numerous readers at home, and ought to be commended to every British subject in this colony and at the Coast Ports engaged in shipping business.

There is a Mercantile Marine Officers' Association in Shanghai, but we are very seldom reminded of its existence more than once a year, when it gives a ball which is amongst the best of the season. In short, the Association, which, we believe, was founded with a much more serious object, has gradually become a mere social club for ship captains and marine officers who return to the shore.

#### Intimations.



ARE NOW SHEWING—  
IRON BEDSTEDS,  
BRASS BEDSTEDS,  
BEDDING, MATTRESSES, &c.  
DOWN QUILTS, BLANKETS, RUGS,  
BEDROOM FURNITURE,  
TOILET SETS, &c.

Hongkong, 16th January, 1892.

based upon the urgency and character of such emergencies. So much for getting up steam to start to the scene of disaster, so much for shutting off duty to stand by, and lend a hand to those in danger! If this theory is carried out logically there will be a graduated scale of charges fixed by the Admiralty for every contingency that may arise to the British communities in China, and even if a whole foreign colony or settlement is threatened with destruction by fanatical mobs, a guarantee will have to be given first that the cost of the required quantity of powder will be defrayed by those in whose interest it is expended. It is no wonder that the Hongkong Marine Officers' Association has taken the matter up, and we should like to see the Shanghai Association doing a similar interest in matters which so closely concern the welfare of the body itself as well as of foreign mercantile interests in China generally.

#### THE GREAT LAND SWINDLE IN AUSTRALIA.

Australia is pre-eminently the home of land-speculation and land-swindles. There is probably more land in the market in Australia, in proportion to the population, than there is in any other country on earth. The principal crop of this fertile continent is a harvest of arid boards bearing the inscription: "These allotments for sale." And a hundred thousand fields, which ought to be rich with fruit or grain, grow nothing but a glowing placard, announcing that a desirable property is to be offered by public auction. Nearly half the land-holders of Australia never dream of turning the soil to any profitable purpose; they have never learned to regard it as a means for the sustenance of humanity, but only as a substance to be carved out in small sub-divisions, and traded off or instalment principles. There are more estate agents to the square-mile in Australia than in any other country known to geography; also, there are more building societies, land companies, auctioneers, and syndicates in these provinces than in any other civilized region. There are six times as many allotments for sale as a population of three million souls can reasonably purchase, and any individual who seems to want a patch of ground is liable to be trodden to death by the frantic rush of agents, all desirous of making over to him all sorts and varieties of property. Several thousands of men scattered over every part of this continent have no visible means of existence except by looking in a dingy office in company with a doctored ledger, and a copy of the minutes of a quarter-acre of ground to any victim who chances to pass by. Some of them are willing to sell for a small deposit down, and the balance to be paid in the dim, indefinite future; some require no deposit at all, and profess not to want the balance till the Day of Judgment; some want nothing whatever, by their own showing, and will lend the buyer money to build with as well. Most of them simply put down in their books any property that chances to be for sale, and wait a commission out of the vendor if they happen to find a customer, and, as a consequence, twelve or fifteen members of the tribe often live, or attempt to live, on the effort to sell one allotment which, as likely as not, proves unsaleable. Also, they all have money to lend in sums varying from £50 up to £50,000, at the shortest notice.

The average property-agent is a mystery. As a rule, he is a dusty, seedy, middle-aged individual, with a shifty eye, and a brown coat, and a dusty, hard hat, and a wooden expression like the side of a hut. Very few people ever saw an old property-agent or a young one, and nobody, except a dodgy agent's funeral, his office is generally up of a lane, in a dark building opening out of a lane. It consists mostly of one room, with an ink-plashed deal table in it, and two lumpy chairs, and a murky window, and there are huge blot on the floor, as if he had wet ink in some moment of depression when trade was unusually bad. Very few people ever saw an agent sell any property in one of these dens, or found him collecting rent from a body, or discovered him in the act of lending a large sum to anybody on mortgage; and not one man in a hundred, on going into the office, ever met another man coming out. The inhabitant of the premises is always found writing a letter of some kind to an alleged client, and presumably he posts the letter in the inside pocket of his old, brown coat, and leaves it there to all futurity. He comes early and keeps open late, with a dreary, yellow gas-jet flaring over his head; he never seems to think about anything in particular; he eats sadly at a wretched restaurant, and in is too mad to get drunk; a jovially-intoxicated property-agent is an unknown quantity. Presumably he lives somewhere, but this is not certain. He is only a solemn, brown anomaly in an office, and apparently he exists by sitting hard down on a chair, and his use to the world at large is not worth mentioning.

Now and then, however, some abnormally bright and energetic specimen of the brotherhood sells a suburban allotment on time-payment, generally to a member of the working classes, the orthodox, dismal agent never sells anything. He probably collects a small deposit, and executes a document by which his alleged principal owns up to the transaction, and agrees to transfer the property in due legal form, on receipt of the last instalment at some period, probably 10 years ahead. The buyer generally takes the existence of this principal for granted; he also takes the ownership of the land for granted; and assumes that the title is correct and thoroughly reliable. He further assumes that there is no mortgage on the property, or, if there is, that the owner of the

alleged owner, will pay the interest regularly and meet the principal in due time. Or, if he is sufficiently business-like to investigate these points, and finds that everything is in good order, he still has to assume that the landholder will not mortgage the property at some future time, or, if he does, that he will meet the liability honourably; that he will not sell the land to a dozen different individuals and mortgage it as well, and bolt with the profits of the nefarious transaction; that he will not go bankrupt; and that the dreary middleman with the dismal countenance, and the dismal office, and the hard hat, will honourably pay over the money to his principal. If there is one instance of embezzling it and running, lastly, he takes it as read that the seller will convey the land when the payments are completed, instead of simply taking all his money and then laughing at him—as he is enabled to do by the fact that the preliminary legal expenses involved in compelling the vendor to deliver the article that has been bought and paid for are beyond the reach of the ordinary humble investor. Among all these chances the position of the individual who takes up a time-payment allotment is about as dangerous as that of a heretic in the Middle Ages or an experimentalist who baits on the tail of a tiger.

In New South Wales, at all events, the person who sells land is one of the few who are allowed to acquire money by false pretences with absolute impunity. The dull, dusty phenomenon in the office is himself an almost sufficient evidence of the dishonesty of his calling, for he is much too numerous to be supported by the humble percentage which is supposed to fall to his lot. The land-jobber may mortgage his land to one individual and at the same time sell it to another, but he takes all the latter's savings he is in no way compelled to use the money in clearing off the mortgage. He may simply appropriate both the mortgage money and the purchase money, and then go insolvent, which case the mortgagee takes everything, and the buyer loses all his little pile, and has no redress. The seller, of course, knows that the unpaid mortgage must foreclose; he knows also that the weak and confiding speculators who are tolling to pay the purchase money of their quarter-acre allotments will never get anything in return; and as he takes their coin through a long series of years under the promise that they will receive a legal title in exchange, which promise he deliberately makes of no account, he thereby obtains the money by false pretences, and the money by absorbing the earnings of the industrious and provident classes all through the best years of their lives, and then reduces them to ruin in their old age; he softly absorbs the savings of the household bread-winner, and when that victim has lived and died in the endeavour to make some provision for his family he leaves the widow and the orphans to be thrown out by the mortgagee. He is many degrees baser and more heartless than the three-card man or the toutage-fixer, and he compares badly with the ordinary gamester. But the law is mighty, and therefore this particular fraud is strictly protected by statute. If he were allowed seven years penal servitude like any other common swindler, more than one prominent politician whom the world has here named would now be pounding road-metal under Government supervision.

The remedy for this astonishing state of things is sufficiently simple. Every individual selling land on the instalment plan should be required to deposit the deeds in the Titles Office, and to furnish the buyers with a certificate from that office stating whether the land has been deposited. There would be no hardship in this, for the land once sold—the seller could not possibly want the deeds, save for purposes of fraud; and he could make as possible profit out of them by any honest process. They cease, in fact, to belong to him from the moment the sale is effected, and no individual can claim to trade off a property and still keep it in his own hands. Any attempt to sell land on the instalment plan while a mortgage remains on the deeds, should be treated as a felony. If the vendor requires immediate accommodation he can mortgage the unpaid instalments, to any extent he pleases; in other words, he will be at liberty to hypothecate his own interest, but will no longer be permitted to trade off interests that are not his own. The man who sells land would then be placed on the same footing as the person who sells any other material substance; he would be required to deliver the article for which he had received payment, and also attempt to obtain payment on a false pretence of making delivery would be treated in the same way as are false pretences in general. It is a small thing to ask that a landholder should not be allowed to sell the same article to two different buyers, and take the value from each of them. But so far, the legal element in the Legislature has shown itself strongly opposed to any change.

The barrier, as another variety of common swindler who is authorized to take retainers, is the false pretence of doing work which he has never done, or of doing work which he has done, but which he has never done, and so forth. The people have taken no effectual steps to guard either of them. But of late the land-lamstain integrity has become too great a burden. The old, mysterious property agent in his murky, ink-plashed office was an incubus, but at the worst he was a small and humble incubus, and he did his frauds in a small and humble fashion; but the insolvent "banker" and building societies, and the big landowners of recent years—who, as the same murky individual on a larger and happier scale—have introduced the evil, and the case is becoming every day more urgent.—*Sydney Bulletin*.

#### Co-day's Advertisements.

WOODYEAR'S  
AUSTRALIAN  
CIRCUS.



THE POPULAR EVENING RESORT.

FIRST GRAND CHANGE OF PROGRAMME.

EVERYTHING NEW.

EVERYTHING NEW.

THE JAPS OUTDONE.

VICTOR VALAZIE'S GREAT SHOULDER PERCH.

LITTLE ETHEL'S DARING TRAPEZE ACT.

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HURRICANE HURDLE ACT.

Signor BYSSACK'S AERIAL RINGS,

AND OTHER CHOICE ACTS FROM OUR

EXTENSIVE REPERTOIRE.

THE CIRCUS WILL BE OPEN

EVERY EVENING.

PRICES OF ADMISSION:—

Boxes of 6 Chairs ..... \$9.00

Single Chair in Box ..... 1.50

Dress Circle Chairs ..... 1.00

Stalls, Carpeted Seats ..... 50

Plt ..... 30

Children, Soldiers and Sailors in uniform, to

Plt 20 cents. Half-price to all other parts except

boxes.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

GRAND MATINEE,

Doors open at 2.30, commencing 3.30 p.m.

Look out for Professor VALAZIE'S

Drop from the Clouds.

MADAME WOODYEAR, Proprietors.

W. HARLAND, General Agent.

S. REICH, Business Manager.

VICTOR VALAZIE, Business Manager.

Hongkong, 27th January 1892.

THEATRE ROYAL,

CITY HALL.

ONE-NIGHT ONLY.

POSITIVELY THE LAST NIGHT

AND THE ONLY NIGHT.

M O N D A Y,

the 1st February.

PROFESSOR S. S. BALDWIN'S

BUTTERFLY COMPANY.

Owing to a sharp attack of illness, (haemorrhage of the throat) Professor Baldwin, unable to appear last night (Tuesday), the Company will however appear next Monday night for one night only (as they sail for America on the following day), when Mrs. Baldwin's great Clairvoyance will be given and a new programme. See future Advertisements.

Secure Reserved Seats at Messrs. Kelly & Walsh, Ltd.

NOTICE.

MR. JOHANN GEORG LUDWIG

SCHROTER has this day been authorized to sign the name of our Firm.

MEYER & Co.

Hongkong, 26th January, 1892.

"SHIRE" LINE OF STEAMERS.

FOR NAGASAKI, KOBE AND YOKOHAMA,

VI A INLAND SEA.

THE Steamship

"RADNORSHIRE"

Captain F. Davies, will be despatched as above on FRIDAY, the 3rd February.

For Freight or Passage, apply to

DODWELL, CARLILL & Co.,

Agents.

Hongkong, 27th January, 1892.

FOUND.

A SMALL WHITE TOY DOG, with light

brown ear marks. Wore red collar.

Particulars on application to

"HONGKONG TELEGRAPH" OFFICE.

Hongkong, 27th January, 1892.

CHINESE NEW YEAR BANK HOLIDAY.

In accordance with Ordinance No. 6 of 1875

the Undermentioned BANKS will be

CLOSED for the Transaction of Public Business

on SATURDAY next, the 30th inst.

For the CHARTERED MERCANTILE BANK OF

INDIA, LONDON, AND CHINA.

JOHN THURBURN,

Manager, Hongkong.

For the CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA,

AUSTRALIA, AND CHINA.

T. H. WHITEHEAD,

Manager, Hongkong.

For the HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANKING

CORPORATION,

F. DE BOVIS,

Chief Manager.

For the NEW ORIENTAL BANK CORPORATION

LIMITED,

E. W. RUTTER,

Manager.

For the COMPTE NATIONAL D'ESCOMPTE

DE PARIS,

L. GLENAT,

Acting Agent.

For the BANK OF CHINA, JAPAN, AND THE

STRAITS, LIMITED, HONGKONG,

DE WESTLEY LAYTON,

Secretary.

For the NATIONAL BANK OF CHINA

LIMITED,

GEO. W. F. FLAYFAIR,

Chief Manager.

Hongkong, 26th January, 1892.

#### Amusements.

WAIT FOR IT.  
WATCH FOR IT.  
THE BIG SHOW.



THE P. T. BARNUM SHOW

of the Eastern Continent.

HARMSTON & SONS

(LATE OF CHIARINI'S CIRCUS).

GREAT LONDON OLYMPIC,

ROMAN HIPPODROME,

and

AMERICAN WILD WEST SHOW.

Since our advent in the East we have met shows

in our line from South Africa, Australia, &c.

WHEN WE COME

THEY GO.

MDLE. LE BLONDE'S

COURIER OF ST. PETERSBURGH

in which act this ARTISTE rides and drives

more Horses in our Hippodrome track

than other SO CALLED CIRCUSES

possess in their entire Stud.

NO SELF TAUGHT PERFORMERS IN THIS

COMBINATION.

But boys and girls taken at the proper age and

put under Competent Masters

of their Art.

The result being nothing

BUT FINISHED ARTISTES.

WAIT! KEEP YOUR MONEY FOR THE

BIG SHOW.

THERE YOU WILL GET VALUE.

35 S P L E N D I D H O R S E S 35

PERFORMING ELEPHANTS

40 LADY AND GENTLEMEN ARTISTES.

GENUINE AMERICAN COWBOYS.

NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS

SHARMAN'S TROUPE OF DOGS.

A FEW OF OUR ARTISTES' NAMES.

Mlle. Le Blonde.

The world's premier Equestrienne, Mlle. Rosina,

MDLE. JENNIE, and

May Murray.

GEO. HARMSTON, CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS.

ARIZONA CHARLEY.

KING OF THE LASSO.

Woodward Bro's Kings of the Carpet

GILBERTO THE GREAT

Funny Little Charley.

THE MIDGETS.

Frank, Willie, Johnny and George.

BRAINS AND CAPITAL MUST COME OUT ON

TOP.

TWO LARGE ARENAS

The whole exhibition given under the LARGEST

TENTS ever erected.

OPENING DATE, JAN. 29TH.

WAIT FOR IT, DON'T BE GUILLED.

CHAS. B. HICKS, Manager.



